UNITED NATIONS

ST

Secretariat

ST/IC/1990/81
4 December 1990

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: 1991 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR ARABIC EDITORS

1. A competitive examination for the recruitment of Arabic editors will be held on 17 and 18 April 1991 in New York, Geneva and other duty stations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for Arabic editors will be filled.

2. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations as well as staff members whose service is limited to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) or special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of this examination. Staff members who are successful in this examination and are selected for inclusion in the roster will normally be assigned to fill vacancies as they occur in the Official Records Editing Section of the Department of Conference Services at Headquarters in New York and the Languages Service at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Assignments are subject to rotation and editors may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, according to the needs of the Organization. Staff members are expected to serve a MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS as editors. The assignment of staff members who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 10 and 11 below.

3. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have Arabic as their main language; 1/

(b) Have a perfect command of Arabic and a very good knowledge of English and of either French or Spanish. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant

Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should attach to their application a photocopy of either a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which Arabic is the principal language of instruction. The Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, admit a candidate graduating from a university whose principal language of instruction is other than Arabic, provided he/she has adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is Arabic.

4. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is Arabic, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

5. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. THE BOARD'S DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

6. The written examination will consist of:

(a) Revision of a poorly written speech in Arabic (to be revised from the point of view of grammatical correctness, clarity and succinctness (three hours);

(b) Translation into Arabic of an English text (one and a half hours);

(c) Translation into Arabic of either a French or a Spanish text (one and a half hours); 2/

(d) Editing of an Arabic text (two hours);

(e) Summary of an Arabic text for brevity and clarity while covering all essential points (one hour);

(f) Translation into Arabic of one text or more from a total of four texts offered in Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish (optional) (one and a half hours per text). 2/

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7. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material is NOT permitted during the examination.

8. On the basis of the results obtained in the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview, which will normally take place 8 to 10 weeks after the written component of the examination. The Board will interview each candidate to assess general culture, professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations, willingness to serve at any duty station and, in particular, ability to work as a member of a team. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited to an interview SHOULD NOT assume that they will be offered an assignment.

9. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are NOT subject to appeal. The Board DOES NOT release individual results.

10. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as Arabic editors for a trial period of two years. Staff members at the P-1 level or below will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels.

11. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department of Conference Services and the Office of Human Resources Management will be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their editing functions at the P-3 level. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

12. Upon completion of a training period, editors may be required to work on word-processing or similar data-entry equipment for editing and terminological purposes.

13. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, NOT LATER THAN 18 February 1991, to:

Competitive Examination for Arabic Editors
Recruitment and Placement Division
Room S-2535-E
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017

14. Staff members at Headquarters may obtain copies of model examination papers from the Examinations and Tests Section, room S-2575.

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READEX FICHE

15. In order to ensure receipt of all applications, staff members at offices away from Headquarters are requested to return their application to the Recruitment and Placement Division through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre at their respective duty stations before 18 February 1991, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Recruitment and Placement Division.

Notes

1/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to edit. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

2/ Candidates may not choose the same language in part (c) and part (f).

APPLICATION

1991 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR ARABIC EDITORS 1/

INDEX NO. 2/ / / / / / /

LAST NAME / / / / /

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	Read		Understand		Speak		Write	
	Easily	Not easily	Easily	Not easily	Fluently	Not fluently	Easily	Not easily

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications 6/

Name of institution Place and country	Language of instruction	Attended from/to month/year month/year	Degree 6/ or equivalent	Main field of study

/...

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution Place and country	Language of instruction	Attended from/to month/year month/year	Certificate or equiv. 6/	Main field of study

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/1990/81 and I understand that, if I am successful in the competitive examination for Arabic editors and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as Arabic editor will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of that circular.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Notes

1/ Staff members applying for this examination MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION. In addition, staff members MUST ATTACH written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which Arabic is the principal language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless they were convoked for the G to P examination for promotion to the Professional category or another language examination. Applications which are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member FOR COMPLETION AND RESUBMISSION WITHIN THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS IN THE RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT DIVISION. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of applications in the Recruitment and Placement Division will NOT be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications without delay.

2/ Appears normally on your monthly salary statement and Personnel Action (P-5) forms. If not, please contact your Personnel Officer to obtain your number.

3/ Please indicate Department/Office, e.g., DIESA, OGS, CSTD, ECE, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNOV or other (specify).

4/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to edit. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

5/ Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 (b) of information circular ST/IC/1990/81.

6/ Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.

UNITED
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Secretariat

ST/IC/1990/82
10 December 1990

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for General Services

Subject: EMERGENCY MEASURES FOR THE DISPOSAL OF WASTE AND RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AT HEADQUARTERS

1. The purpose of the present circular is to inform staff members of the emergency measures that will be in effect at Headquarters during the strike of private waste haulers in the City of New York, which commenced on Sunday, 9 December 1990.

2. It is important that waste containing food and beverages is separated from dry waste paper and computer printouts, which are recyclable. To ensure that health and safety-related conditions are adhered to, staff members are encouraged to set aside a few minutes to ensure that waste is properly sorted.

3. Staff members are requested to dispose of food and beverages and their containers in specially marked trash bins designated for this purpose. For the duration of the strike, these bins will be located in rest rooms and will be collected and disposed of periodically. Departments and offices that may require special food and beverage trash bins may call the Buildings Management Service on extension 3.7376. It would also be appreciated if consumption of food and beverages is limited to the dining areas.

4. Specially marked containers for office waste paper and computer printouts usually located near photocopying machines should be used regularly for recyclable papers. Corrugated and cardboard boxes, if any, may be left near the freight elevators in the Secretariat Building and will also be collected periodically.

5. Should the garbage remain uncollected from United Nations premises for a prolonged period, the UNDC1 and UNDC2 buildings will be the first to be severely affected owing to their limited storage space. The Buildings Management Service, in conjunction with the Medical Service, will monitor the waste disposal situation

closely and additional restrictive measures may be imposed as necessary, particularly in the UNDC buildings complex.

6. In view of the temporary additional space required for waste storage, no parking will be allowed in the north service drive of the third basement of the Secretariat Building effective immediately.

UNITED
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ST/IC/1990/83
14 December 1990

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

1. Language proficiency examinations in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish will be held twice in 1991. The first session is scheduled for 29 and 30 January 1991. The second is tentatively scheduled for 21 and 22 May 1991. Details of the second session will be published at a later date. These examinations are open to:

(a) Students who have completed the highest level of a United Nations language course;

(b) Staff members who have not enrolled in a United Nations language course but who can show evidence that they possess, in the language to be tested, a level of knowledge equivalent to that of students who have completed the relevant United Nations language course.

Non-staff members who have not completed the highest level of a United Nations language course are not eligible to sit for the language proficiency examinations.

2. A staff member may take a language proficiency examination to obtain a certificate establishing proficiency in a second official language and, in certain cases:

(a) To benefit from the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968;

(b) To qualify for the first or second language allowance under staff rule 103.6.

3. Resolution 2480 B (XXIII) applies to Professional and higher-level staff members subject to geographical distribution who work in one of the working languages of the Secretariat and who have an adequate and confirmed knowledge of a second official language. The criteria for benefiting from the language incentives provided for under the resolution are set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/207 of 23 December 1971.

4. Under staff rule 103.6, staff members in the General Service and Trades and Crafts categories or in the Field Service below level 6 are eligible for language allowances. Staff members must be proficient in two official languages and must pass the language proficiency examination in one of them to receive the allowance. To receive a second language allowance they must be proficient in three official languages and must pass the proficiency examination in two of them. Staff members whose mother tongue is an official language of the Organization must pass the examination in another official language, which may be the language in which they are required to be proficient by the terms of their appointment. The language proficiency examination in their mother tongue is waived. Staff members whose mother tongue is not one of the official languages must pass the examination in an official language other than that in which they are required to be proficient by the terms of their appointment. The proficiency examination in that language is waived.

5. Those wishing to take the examination in January 1991 must submit a P.46 application form to the Language Training Programme of the Training Service (room S-606, ext. 3-7021). A separate application must be submitted for each lanaguage examination requested. Staff members may register in room S-606 between 1 and 3 p.m. from 10 to 23 January 1991.

6. Successful candidates must pass BOTH the written and oral parts of the examination with a minimum score of 65 per cent in each part.

7. In certain cases in which candidates receive a score of 80 per cent or more on the written examination but fail the oral, the jury adjudicating the examination will review the cases and may allow candidates to retain their written score for the following examination session, for which they must fill out a new application form. In such cases, candidates will receive written notification of the jury's decision and will have to retake only the oral examination at the following session. The same consideration cannot be given, however, for the oral test or to candidates who have not taken both parts of the examination at the same session.

8. The schedule for the written examination for the January 1991 session is as follows:

29 January 1991

English ..... 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Chinese ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Russian ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

/...

30 January 1991

French ..... 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Arabic ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Spanish ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Candidates are advised to arrive 15 minutes before the start of the examination time in order to allow for check-in procedures.

9. The oral examination will consist of individual 15-minute interviews. Candidates will be given interview appointments at the time of their registration.

10. The number of the conference room in which each examination will be held will be posted in the Secretariat Building on the fourth, fifth and sixth floor bulletin boards and on those in the DC1, DC2, and DC3 buildings. Candidates should check the bulletin boards, as the Training Service cannot send out individual notices for the written examinations.

11. Copies of sample examinations can be obtained in room S-606.

12. Candidates will receive written notification of their examination results by mid-March 1991. No results will be available prior to official notice.

UNITED NATIONS

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Secretariat

ST/IC/1990/84
14 December 1990

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff at duty stations away from Headquarters

From: The Controller

Subject: VAN BREDA MEDICAL, HOSPITAL AND DENTAL INSURANCE*

1. The purpose of the present circular is to set out the provisions concerning renewal of the Van Breda medical, hospital and dental insurance plan for staff members at offices away from Headquarters, which will take effect on 1 January 1991. The key provisions of the renewal for 1991 are:

(a) An overall 5 per cent reduction in the premium level (see para. 2 below);

(b) An increase in the annual dental reimbursement ceiling from $600 to $750 (see annex I to the present document, para. 2 (c));

(c) An increase in the annual total reimbursement ceiling for medical, hospital and dental treatment costs combined from $150,000 to $200,000 per insured participant (see annex I, para. 1);

(d) A modification of the psychiatric treatment benefit (see annex I, para. 2 (d));

(e) A clarification regarding the prior approval requirement for hospitalization in the United States of America (see annex II, paras. 3 and 5).

2. As a result of the good performance of the plan during 1990, on the one hand, and the upward movement of medical net salary levels, on the other, monthly premium contributions and the related staff contributions, expressed as a percentage of medical net salary, have been reduced for 1991, as follows:

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* Personnel Manual index No. 6190.

Premium levels

Type of coverage	Monthly premiums (United States dollars) Current	Effective 1 January 1991
Staff member only	65.00	61.00
Staff member and one family member	137.00	130.00
Staff member and two or more eligible family members	227.00	215.00

Staff contributions

Type of coverage	Percentages of medical net salary Current	Effective 1 January 1991
Staff member only	1.39	1.04
Staff member and one family member	2.25	1.71
Staff member and two or more eligible family members	3.58	2.71

3. It has been decided to continue the following measures during the new policy period:

(a) The prior approval provision for hospitalization in the United States, as modified (fully described in annex II to the present document);

(b) The mandatory second surgical opinion requirement for 16 surgical procedures (details of which are set forth in annex III to the present document). The following points should be noted in connection with the mandatory second surgical opinion requirement:

(i) A second and, if desired, a third opinion will be covered 100 per cent by the plan;

(ii) The second and possibly third opinions rendered do not have to concur with the original opinion or with one another. The participant is free to follow an independent course of action, undergoing surgery, as prescribed in the original opinion, or not. If surgery is elected, the

subscriber must, in order to avoid penalty, submit the second/third opinion(s) with the claim, regardless of whether the subsequent opinions supported the original opinion.

4. In line with the methodology used in the calculation of staff contributions towards premiums for other United Nations insurance schemes, the contributions of participants in the Van Breda scheme are calculated as a percentage of their respective medical net salaries in accordance with the rates set forth above. Medical net salary consists of gross salary, less staff assessment, plus language allowance, non-resident's allowance and post adjustment, as applicable. In no case will staff contributions be greater than 85 per cent of the premiums shown above.

Eligible family members

5. "Eligible family members" refers to a spouse and one or more eligible children or no spouse but two or more eligible children. A spouse is always eligible. A child is eligible to be covered under this scheme until the end of the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of 25, provided that he or she is not married and not in full-time employment; disabled children may be eligible for continued coverage after age 25. Complete information regarding these provisions can be found in information circular ST/IC/86/72, entitled "Age limitation on the participation of dependent children in United Nations health insurance schemes".

Participants with dependants residing in the United States

6. It should be borne in mind that participants currently in the Van Breda scheme with dependants residing in the United States are encouraged to enrol in the Blue Cross/Aetna Major Medical insurance plan. This is especially important since medical expenses incurred in the United States must generally be paid immediately and reimbursement claimed from the insurance company. In the case of hospitalization, persons not covered by a United States insurance company are not admitted unless expenses are prepaid or guaranteed by Van Breda. Therefore, participants in this particular situation are requested to switch as soon as possible to the Blue Cross/Aetna Major Medical plan offered by the United Nations. Participants choosing to remain on the Van Breda plan will be required to conform to the pre-approval requirements and will be responsible for all payments and prepayments incurred. As the Blue Cross/Aetna Major Medical plan does not include dental coverage, participants may also wish to subscribe to the (optional) Group Health Incorporated (GHI) dental plan.

Basis for claim reimbursement in United States dollars

7. Claim reimbursement is made in United States dollars, converted from the currency in which the hospital, medical or dental expenses have been incurred. Up to 31 December 1989, reimbursement has been based on the United Nations operational rate of exchange in effect on the date the claim has been signed. With effect from

1 January 1990, REIMBURSEMENT IN UNITED STATES DOLLARS IS BASED ON THE UNITED NATIONS OPERATIONAL RATE OF EXCHANGE IN EFFECT ON THE DATE THE MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXPENSES ARE INCURRED, AND, IN THE CASE OF HOSPITAL EXPENSES, ON THE DATE THE HOSPITAL BILL IS RENDERED.

8. Annex I to the present circular sets out a summary of the benefits payable under the Van Breda plan.

9. Annex II contains a recapitulation of the provisions pertaining to hospitalization in the United States.

10. Annex III sets out relevant details concerning the second surgical opinion requirement.

Conversion privilege

11. Participants who cease employment with the United Nations and who do not qualify for after-service health insurance benefits may arrange for medical coverage with Van Breda under an individual contract, provided that application is made within 31 days of termination of coverage under the plan. The conversion privilege, which is part of the United Nations group contract with Van Breda, means that the insurer cannot refuse to insure an applicant and that no certification of medical eligibility is required. THE CONVERSION PRIVILEGE, HOWEVER, DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE SAME INSURANCE PREMIUM RATES OR SCHEDULE OF BENEFITS IN EFFECT FOR THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP POLICY WILL BE OFFERED IN RESPECT OF INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE CONTRACTS. Details concerning conversion to an individual insurance policy may be obtained by communicating directly with Van Breda at the following address:

J. Van Breda and Co. International
Plantin en Moretuslei 295
B-2140 Borgerhout
Antwerp, Belgium

Telex No.: BREDCO B 31788
Fax No.: 00 323 271 02 47 (facsimile transmission)

Annex I

VAN BREDA INSURANCE SCHEME

1. The Van Breda insurance scheme provides for reimbursement of medical, hospital and dental treatment costs up to a maximum of $200,000 per insured participant per calendar year. In addition to the maximum reimbursement per calendar year, certain maxima per treatment, procedure or service may also be applied on the basis of a determination of reasonable and customary charges for the benefit at the place of treatment.

2. The scheme is subject to the following provisions and limitations:

(a) Under the basic component, reimbursement in respect of medical treatment prescribed by qualified doctors is limited to 80 per cent of the costs incurred, including doctors' fees. Under the major medical component, 80 per cent of the remaining unpaid costs is paid, subject to a co-payment of $200 per participant and $600 per family;

(b) The cost of hospital services (excluding doctors' fees) is reimbursed at the rate of 100 per cent of the costs involved, including such items as bed and board, general nursing service, use of the operating room and equipment, use of the recovery room and equipment, laboratory examinations, X-ray examinations and drugs and medicines for use in the hospital. For hospitalization in Europe and in North America, the standard of accommodation is limited to semi-private room care, i.e., two or more patients in the same room, except that, under the following circumstances, private-room care will be reimbursed in full:

(i) When the nature and gravity of the illness requires private-room care and such care is requested by the attending physician;

(ii) When the patient is admitted on an emergency basis to a hospital that has semi-private accommodation but none is available at the time;

(iii) When the patient is admitted to a hospital that does not have any semi-private accommodation, i.e., it has no standard of accommodation other than private rooms and general wards.

Europe and North America are defined for this purpose as Europe, including Eastern Europe, Malta, Cyprus and Turkey (European portion), and Canada and the United States of America;

(c) The cost of dental treatment is reimbursable at the rate of 80 per cent up to a maximum sum of $750 per insured participant per calendar year. The cost of dento-facial orthopaedics is covered only if the treatment is started before the patient has reached his or her fifteenth birthday, and reimbursement is provided only during a treatment period of four years;

(d) The cost of out-patient mental health treatment, including psychoanalysis, is normally only reimbursable if the patient is treated by a medical doctor engaged in the practice of psychiatry. However, upon referral by a psychiatrist or, in localities where a psychiatrist is not available, by a qualified physician, the services of a licensed psychologist or a licensed psychiatric social worker will be covered. The costs of psychiatric treatment in respect of insured participants is reimbursable at the rate of 50 per cent and to a maximum reimbursement of $500 for not more than 50 visits per insured person in any consecutive six-month period;

(e) The cost of radiological treatment is reimbursable at the rate of 80 per cent only if the patient has been referred to the specialist by the doctor in attendance;

(f) The cost of hearing aids and optical lenses is covered, with the following limitations:

(i) Hearing aids. Reimbursement at 80 per cent (only basic coverage, no major medical coverage), with a maximum of $150 per apparatus, including the related examination, and a maximum of one apparatus per ear in any period of three years;

(ii) Optical lenses. Reimbursement at 80 per cent (only basic coverage, no major medical coverage) with a maximum of $25 per lens and a maximum of two lenses in any period of two years.

In order to be entitled to these benefits, a staff member or the participating family member will have to have been a participant in the Van Breda scheme for one year or more.

3. The insurance scheme does not cover:

(a) Periodic preventive health examinations;

(b) Examination of the eyes for optical lenses (eyeglasses or contact lenses);

(c) Injuries as a consequence of voluntary or intentional action on the part of the insured participant;

(d) Insured participants who are mobilized or who volunteer for military service in time of war;

(e) Injuries resulting from motor-vehicle racing or dangerous competitions in respect of which betting is allowed (normal sports competitions are covered);

(f) The consequences of insurrections or riots if, by taking part, the insured participant has broken the applicable laws; and the consequences of brawls, except in cases of self-defence;

(g) Spa cures, rejuvenation cures or cosmetic treatment (cosmetic surgery is covered, however, where it is necessary as the result of an accident for which coverage is provided);

(h) The direct or indirect results of explosions, heat release or irradiation produced by transmutation of the atomic nucleus or by radioactivity or resulting from radiation produced by the artificial acceleration of nuclear particles;

(i) Expenses for, or in connection with, travel or transportation, whether by ambulance or otherwise, except that charges for professional ambulance service used to transport the insured participant between the place where he or she is injured by an accident or stricken by disease and the first hospital where treatment is given will not be excluded.

4. Reimbursement for surgery undertaken without providing to Van Breda at the time the claim is submitted a second opinion from a qualified independent physician, and obtained prior to the date on which the surgery is performed, will be subject to a 25 per cent penalty. A 25 per cent reduction will be made in the normal reimbursement calculated by the company for the total cost of the surgery, and the major medical component will not apply. The cost of the second opinion will be reimbursed at 100 per cent and, should a participant desire a third opinion, the cost of that opinion will also be reimbursed at the rate of 100 per cent. The opinions rendered may be conflicting, i.e., they do not have to be in agreement, and the participant is free to act independently without any penalty once a second opinion has been obtained. Bona fide emergencies requiring one of the above surgical procedures will be exempt from the second opinion requirement.

Annex II

PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO HOSPITALIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES

1. A prior approval measure was introduced on 1 March 1988 to control the frequency of hospitalization within the United States where overall costs frequently run far above the costs for comparable medical services in other countries. Prior approval from Van Breda is required for hospitalization in the United States, that is, for accommodation in a United States hospital and for all related in-patient costs incurred. The procedures for requesting prior approval from Van Breda are described below. Where prior approval has not been obtained from Van Breda for hospitalization in the United States, or where such hospitalization has not been specifically approved by the United Nations Medical Director at Headquarters, the normal reimbursement calculated will be reduced by 25 per cent and the major medical coverage component will not apply in respect of doctors' fees for services administered during hospitalization. The above prior approval measure will not apply to out-patient costs incurred in the United States. An illustration of how this reimbursement arrangement would be computed is shown in paragraph 6 below.

2. All requests for approval for hospitalization in the United States should be submitted to:

J. Van Breda and Co. International
Plantin en Moretuslei 295
B-2140 Borgerhout
Antwerp, Belgium

Telex No.: BREDCO B 31788
Fax No.: 00 323 271 02 47 (facsimile transmission)

Such requests should be accompanied by the following supporting information:

(a) Duty station of the participant;

(b) Evidence of medical necessity for hospitalization in the United States. In this connection, participants are urged to bear in mind that, with very few exceptions, required medical procedures and high levels of patient care and treatment are routinely available in many developed and developing countries;

(c) Evidence of medical necessity submitted to Van Breda in support of approval of hospitalization in the United States should comprise the following elements:

(i) A statement of diagnosis;

(ii) The specifications of the required medical treatment;

(iii) Identification of the hospital in the United States where the procedure/treatment would be performed;

(iv) Expected duration of hospitalization;

(v) Estimate of the cost of the proposed treatment/procedure, obtained from the hospital in the United States where treatment is planned.

3. General guidelines have been provided to Van Breda to assist them in reviewing the requests for hospitalization in the United States. Under these guidelines, such requests may be considered favourably in the following circumstances:

(a) The proposed treatment is at a location or in a facility where the costs are comparable to those that would normally be applicable in other countries for similar treatment of comparable quality and standards. It should be noted that hospital costs vary considerably throughout the United States, and costs are often significantly lower at locations other than in the north-east (e.g., New York, Washington and the Boston area), in Florida or in California;

(b) In situations where the medical condition may be life threatening or of a very high risk with potential complications, and where the necessary treatment is not routinely available elsewhere, sympathetic consideration may be given to requests for hospitalization in the United States.

No prior approval is required where medical evacuation to the United States has been approved by the United Nations Medical Director.

4. Notwithstanding the above requirements in respect of hospitalization in the United States, participants should rest assured that the expense for bona fide medical emergencies arising while in the United States will be reimbursed without having to obtain prior approval. However, in filing the related claim with Van Breda, appropriate data should be submitted to support the emergency nature of the illness as well as one's presence in the United States at the onset of the illness.

5. In all instances where Van Breda does not give approval in respect of hospitalization in the United States, the participant will be informed by Van Breda. Should the participant, nevertheless, desire hospitalization in the United States, he or she is still free to elect that option but the normal reimbursement will be reduced as set out in paragraph 1.

6. The following example illustrates reimbursement in cases requiring prior approval:

In the case of a single participant:

	Submitted cost	If approved (normal reimbursement)	If not approved
	(In United States dollars)		
Hospital room/board	5 000	5 000 a/	3 750 b/
Doctor's fee	2 000	1 760 c/	1 200 d/
Totals submitted/paid	7 000	6 760	4 950

		$
a/	Hospital room/board (100 per cent under basic coverage)	5 000
b/	Hospital room/board	5 000
	Reimbursement (100 per cent under basic coverage)	5 000
	Reimbursement less 25 per cent	3 750
c/	Doctor's fee submitted	2 000
	Reimbursement (80 per cent under basic coverage)	1 600
	Balance and basis for major medical coverage	400
	Less: annual co-payment	200
	Unreimbursed in excess of deductible	200
i.e.		
	Reimbursement under basic coverage	1 600
	Reimbursement under major medical (80 per cent x $US 200)	160
	Total reimbursement	1 760
d/	Doctor's fee	2 000
	Reimbursement (80 per cent under basic coverage)	1 600
	Reimbursement less 25 per cent	1 200

Annex III

SECOND SURGICAL OPINION REQUIREMENT

1. A mandatory second surgical opinion requirement commenced on 1 March 1989 for a group of 16 surgical procedures. This means that, for the 16 procedures listed below, a second opinion from a qualified physician must be obtained. If the second opinion does not agree with the first, a third opinion may be sought. Both the second and third opinion are 100 per cent reimbursable by the plan. Moreover, and most importantly, the opinions rendered do not have to coincide with each other in order to have fulfilled this requirement, and the participant may choose a medical course of action which may not agree with any of the opinions rendered. The second surgical opinion requirement is intended to prescribe a course of prudent action on the part of the patient. It is widely recognized today that many surgical procedures are not medically necessary as, increasingly for many conditions, non-surgical treatments are alternatively being utilized. Medically unnecessary surgery exposes the patient to needless risk and often costs the patient (and the plan) more than the alternative non-surgical treatment.

2. The surgical procedures requiring a second opinion are set forth below. Please take note that the second opinion must be provided by a physician not associated or in practice with the physician who originally recommended and proposed to perform the surgery.

	Procedure	Explanation
1.	Bunionectomy	Removal of bunions
2.	Cholecystectomy	Removal of gall bladder
3.	Dilation and curettage	Dilation of cervix and scraping of uterus
4.	Excision of cataracts	Removal of cataracts
5.	Haemorrhoidectomy	Removal of haemorrhoids
6.	Hernia (inguinal) repair	Repair of hernia in the groin
7.	Hysterectomy	Removal of uterus
8.	Knee surgery	Knee operation
9.	Laminectomy	Removal of part of spine
10.	Mastectomy: partial or complete	Partial or complete removal of breast tissue
11.	Prostatectomy	Removal of prostate

	Procedure	Explanation
12.	Septo-rhinoplasty	Nose surgery for functional improvement
13.	Spinal fusion	Surgical welding of spine segments
14.	Tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy	Removal of tonsils and/or adenoids
15.	Varicose veins	Removal and tying of varicose veins
16.	Coronary artery bypass	Heart surgery to bypass one or more blocked arteries feeding the heart

3. Reimbursement for surgery undertaken without providing to Van Breda at the time the claim is submitted a second opinion from a qualified independent physician (whether or not in agreement with the original opinion recommending surgery), and obtained prior to the date on which the surgery is performed, will be subject to a 25 per cent penalty. A 25 per cent reduction will be made in the normal reimbursement calculated by the company for the total cost of the surgery, and the major medical coverage component will not apply. Bona fide emergencies requiring one of the above surgical procedures will be exempt from the second opinion requirement. However, in filing the related claim with Van Breda, appropriate information should be submitted to support the emergency nature of the surgery. Participants should note that in duty stations where, owing to the small size of the medical community, it may be difficult to obtain an opinion from a second qualified independent physician, the opinion of the local United Nations examining physician will be acceptable as the second opinion. Apart from situations of this nature, the opinion of the local United Nations examining physician will not be acceptable.

4. Participants, therefore, should be sure, when submitting a claim in connection with any of the 16 surgical procedures listed in paragraph 2, to include the report of the second (and, where applicable, third) independent physician in addition to the complete report of the initial examining physician who recommended the surgery. It should be noted that the surgery for which the mandatory second opinion is needed does not require prior approval from Van Breda unless the surgery is to be performed in the United States (see annex II to the present document).

UNITED NATIONS

ST

Secretariat

ST/IC/1990/85
31 December 1990

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters

From: The Controller

Subject: REIMBURSEMENT OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS UNDER THE BLUE CROSS WRAPARCUND PLUS INSURANCE PLAN*

1. With effect from 1 January 1991, there will be no deductible in connection with the reimbursement of prescription drugs under the Blue Cross Wraparound Plus health insurance plan. This arrangement applies to all prescription drugs dispensed under the Blue Cross Wraparound Plus plan on or after 1 January 1991, but not to prescriptions filled prior to 1 January 1991. Heretofore, a deductible of $200 had to be met before reimbursement of prescription drug expenses was made. Claims submitted to Blue Cross for prescription drugs, whether prescribed by a participating physician or a non-participating physician, will be reimbursed in all cases at the rate of 80 per cent of the reasonable and customary cost of such prescription drugs. The normal 20 per cent co-payment by the subscriber will continue to apply. Monthly premiums pertaining to the plan remain unchanged, as set out in annex I to ST/IC/1990/39.

2. Blue Cross Wraparound Plus claim forms are available in the Insurance Section, room S-2765.

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* Personnel Manual index No. 6171.

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